

U.S. Foreign Policy Must be “Force for Good,” “Represent Shared Values”

Washington, DC - Congressman Jeff Fortenberry, a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, today commented on the 2009 Foreign Relations Authorization Act. This measure sets goals for U.S. foreign policy and funds the Department of State and the Peace Corps for Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011.

“Our foreign policy should be a force for good around the world,” said Fortenberry. “It is vitally important that we assist in developing the tools that bind the human family, lift weary human hearts around the world, and provide for justice for all, especially for the most vulnerable among us.

“While I see great value in making prudent foreign relations investments to accomplish these goals, I remain deeply concerned that the bill before us today injects jarring and discordant notes from divisive and unresolved domestic debates into our foreign policy. For instance, based on Secretary Clinton' testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, we now equate abortion advocacy with health care—an issue that nations around the world continue to repudiate and a policy that does not reflect internationally-accepted notions of human rights.

“US foreign policy must not employ divisive tactics that impose controversial Western social paradigms. In good conscience I cannot support this legislation as it stands. I firmly believe that

our foreign policy should reflect our shared values as a nation, and stand ready to work with my colleagues to build a foreign policy framework that reflects what unites us, not what divides us.”

The Foreign Relations Reauthorization Act contained two key Fortenberry amendments to strengthen nuclear security safeguards and protect religious minorities in the Middle East who are subject to persecution.

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